

By **James Chapman**  
Political Correspondent

**LABOUR was accused of stooping to gutter politics last night over Michael Howard's plans to crack down on illegal traveller camps.**

One of the party's senior MPs caused outrage by invoking the language of the Holocaust to attack the Tory proposals – claiming there was a 'whiff of the gas chambers' about them.

Kevin McNamara's slur was seen as particularly insensitive as Mr Howard's grandmother died at Auschwitz.

It came as the Tory leader promised to overhaul the ancient laws of trespass so travellers could be fined or jailed if they moved on to unauthorised sites.

He also pledged to reform the planning system to stop travellers buying land, developing a site and then applying for planning permission retrospectively.

Mr McNamara, Labour's former Northern Ireland spokesman, and MP for Hull North, accused Mr Howard of using travellers to appeal to voters' 'basest motives' ahead of the General Election.

'They are an easy target to attack, to

**Turn to Page 2, Col. 3**